IOC has detected a case of not accepting application for new gas connection by their LPG distributorship in Delhi in the month of April, 2007. Action against the erring distributorship was taken as per provisions of Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG).

Availability of Ethanol and Jatropha

†3062. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that required quantity of both Ethanol and Jatropha (Ratanjot) to be mixed with petrol and diesel to be sold to the consumer is available in the country;

if so, the details thereof;

the procurement price of both these products for oil companies;

whether this mixture affects the prices of petrol and diesel; and

if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) As against industry's requirement of 180 crore litres of ethanol for 5% Ethanol Blended Petrol programme for a period of three years, the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have been able to contract 140.4 crore litres and they have so far procured 29.5 crore litres under the programme (as on 31.3.08). However, the levies/taxes on ethanol imposed in certain States has affected procurement of ethanol in those States as it becomes commercially unviable.

Presently, the procurement price of ethanol ex-factory ranges form Rs. 17250.15 per kl to Rs. 21500 per kl and that of bio-diesel is Rs. 26.50 per litre.

and (e) No. The selling price of ethanol blended petrol is the same as that of petrol. The selling price of bio-diesel is also proposed to be at the same level as that of diesel. However, marketing of bio-diesel is yet to commence.

Crude import

3063. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

whether the prices of Indian basket of crude has recently crossed the US $ 100 mark;

whether the indigenous production of crude and gas has slackened due to nonavailability of rigs required for the on-going block explorations; and

what other measures are being taken to restrict the quantum of crude imports into India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. The per barrel price of Indian basket of crude has crossed the US $100 mark on 10th March, 2008. In the month of March, 2008, the average price of Indian Basket of crude was US $ 99.76/- bbl.

† **Original** notice of the question was received in Hindi.

No Sir. The Crude Oil and Gas production by Pvt./JVs during 2007-08 was 5.08 Million Metric Tonne (MMT) and 7.72 Billion Cubic Meter (BCM) respectively as compared to 4.83 MMT and 7.04 BCM in the year 2006-07

Several measures have been/are being taken to restrict the quantum of crude import into India. These are as follows:

(i) Carving out more and more areas for exploration for offer under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

(ii) Quicker development of discovered reserves for enabling early commencement of production.

(iii) Use of stimulation techniques for increasing production from existing fields.

(iv) Application of Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/lmproved Oil Recovery (IOR) techniques for increasing recovery factor from ageing fields.

(v) Arresting decline from ageing fields.

(vi) Acquisition of exploration acreages and oil producing properties overseas to bring in Equity Oil.

(vii) Substitution of oil in the transport sector through use of alternative fuels such as Bio-Diesel, Ethanol-blended petrol, etc.

(viii) Evolving suitable technology for extraction of gas from gas hydrates under National Gas Hydrates Programme (NGHP).

Supply of gas from abroad

†3064. SHRI SHREEGOPAL WAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

whether mere are signs of clearance of obstacles with regard to getting gas from Iran;

whether efforts are being made to get the same through sea-route from some other countries: and

if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHAJ. PATEL): (a)to(c) India has been pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran through the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) transnational gas pipeline. Important issues concerning the implementation of the Project are under discussion amongst the participating countries at bilateral and trilateral levels.

Such multilateral projects involve protracted discussions, as all the aspects have to be carefully examined and deliberated upon to the satisfaction of the participating countries to protect each country's interests and to avoid any problems in the future in the successful operation of the project.

In addition, a Sale-Purchase Agreement (SPA) was signed on 13th June, 2005 in Tehran for 5 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) between the National Iranian Gas Export Company (NIGEC) and the Indian Consortium of GAIL

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.